

# GENE NEWS

*A Publication of the Hawai'i Department of Health Genetics Program*

## *Hawai'i Community Genetics*

*Aloha*

*Laurie Seaver, M.D.*



We are pleased to welcome Dr. Laurie Seaver, Hawai'i Community Genetics' new medical director and clinical geneticist. Dr. Seaver comes to our state from South Carolina, where she has worked for the past eleven years as a clinical geneticist and the Director of Clinical Services at the Greenwood Genetic Center. She has board certifications from the American Board of Pediatrics and American Board of Medical Genetics. Dr. Seaver has extensive experience working with pediatric, prenatal and adult patients.

In addition to her clinical work, Dr. Seaver was also the 2004 president of the National Birth Defects Prevention Network. She has special interest in dysmorphology, embryology, neural tube defects, and Fetal Alcohol Syndrome.

Dr. Seaver is a valuable addition to Hawai'i Community Genetics (HCG). Her presence locally will allow HCG to increase clinical genetic services in Hawai'i. The Stanford Medical Center geneticists will continue to come to Hawai'i periodically to provide support for HCG. We will have more information about clinic schedules in upcoming issues of GeneNews.

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## **Coordinator's Corner**

**Happy New Year from the Genetics Program!**

We are very happy to start the new year with a new local geneticist. Please join us in welcoming Dr. Seaver to the expanding genetics family in Hawai'i. We also have one of the perinatal geneticists, Greigh Hirata, opening his own private practice in January. We wish Dr. Hirata the best as he starts this new endeavor. Contact information for Drs. Seaver and Hirata and other genetic services available in Hawai'i can be found on our website under "Guide to Services."

If you have further questions or comments, please contact me.

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# Genetics For Your Practice II: A Huge Success!

The Hawai'i Department of Health Genetics Program held its second *Genetics For Your Practice* conference on September 10<sup>th</sup>, 2004 for an audience of 116 physicians, nurses, other allied health professionals, and students in related fields (figure 1). All conference participants were asked to complete pre- and post- conference surveys. 104 people completed both surveys, and nine people filled out only one. Survey results were very positive, and are summarized here.

## Recognition of Genetic Conditions, Family History and Referrals

The Hawaii Genetics Program wanted to assess the practice of participants in:

- Recognizing genetic conditions in their patients and/or caseload.
- Obtaining family history information on their patients.
- Making referrals for patients (or knowing when and how to make referrals) to genetics.

Comparison of pre and post surveys revealed that there were overall increases in participants reporting genetic conditions in their caseload, and stating that they plan to take family histories on some or all of their patients. These increases are suggestive of an greater appreciation through the conference for conditions that are or may be genetic, and the importance of family history information in patient care. The results are presented in Figures 2 and 3.

The referral question asked participants whether they have made or plan to make referrals to genetics. The pre-conference survey showed that most (49.4%) of the participants had made less than 10 referrals to genetics. Of the remaining participants who reported seeing patients, 17.7% reported that they had made 10 or more genetic referrals, 20.3% reported that they don't know where or how to make a referral to genetics, and 12.7% reported that their patients have not needed referrals to genetics. Of those who reported that their patients have not needed referrals to genetics, 44.4% reported that they could think of 1-9 patients to refer to genetics following the conference, and 22.2% reported that they could think of 10 or more. Of those who reported prior to the conference that they did not know where or how to make a referral to genetics, the vast majority (72.7%) said after the conference that they plan to make 1-9 referrals to genetics, and 18.2% said they plan to refer 10 or more. These findings were statistically significant, and support that the practical emphasis of this conference achieved its goal of improving recognition of when and how to make appropriate referrals to genetics.

## Awareness of Genetics Resources

Participants were asked to list resources (textbooks/journals and websites) with which they were familiar for obtaining genetics information, both prior to and following the conference. The percent of participants (18.3%) who were able to list one or more journals or textbooks prior to the conference increased to 51.0% listing at least one new textbook or journal after the conference. The knowledge of web-based resources increased from 26.8% to 73.1% among the participants. These results (Figure 4) reveal that the conference was successful at providing participants with new resources for obtaining genetics information.

Figure 1: General Professions of Conference Participants

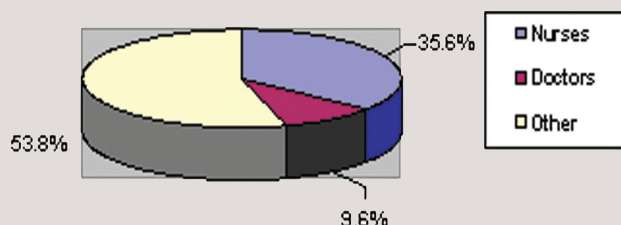
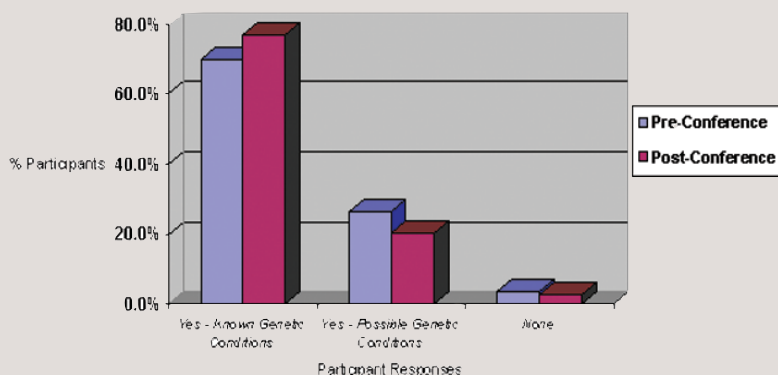


Figure 2: Recognition of Genetic Conditions in Caseload: Participants Reporting Known, Possible & No Genetic Conditions Prior to & Following the Conference



Excellent Conference

"Outstanding content... You are a dynamic team and we are so fortunate to have this pioneering effort in the Western region. Good luck and thank you!"

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## Genetics Knowledge

Participants were asked a series of questions to assess their level of genetics knowledge coming into the conference, compared with immediately following the conference. The possible knowledge scale scores ranged from 0 – 14. The overall average knowledge scale score for the pre-conference survey was 8.1, and for the post-conference survey was increased at 9.1. Although the magnitude of the increase in average knowledge scale score prior to and immediately following the conference was not large in number, the increase was statistically significant. It is worth noting that the average knowledge scale score prior to the conference was relatively high, at 8.1 (out of a possible 14). This may be reflective of the success of past conferences, retention of previously-learned genetics knowledge, and/or increases in general knowledge of genetics among various groups.

## Participants' Conference Satisfaction

Table 1 shows that participant satisfaction was very high. Each of the five primary presentations was identified as very useful or somewhat useful by at least 91% of participants. Over 93% reported that it is likely or very likely that they will use resources and information gained from the conference in their practice, and that they would be likely or very likely to attend another Hawai'i Department of Health Genetics conference in the future.

**Table 1: Participant Conference Satisfaction**

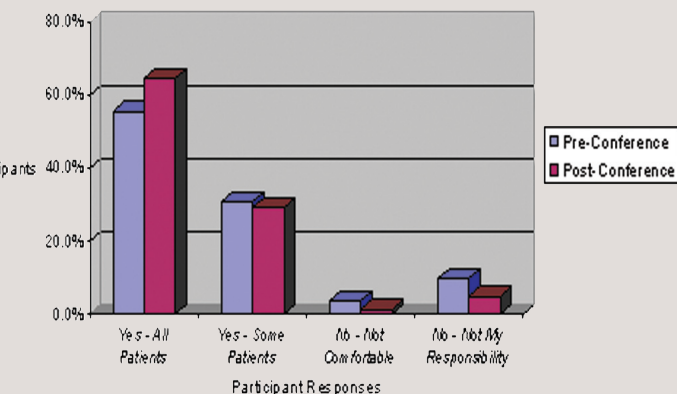
Statement	% Respondents Reporting Likely or Very Likely
Will use information learned from today in practice	94.9%
Will use resources gained today in practice	94.8%
Would attend another Hawai'i Genetics Program conference in the future	93.8%

## A Huge Success!

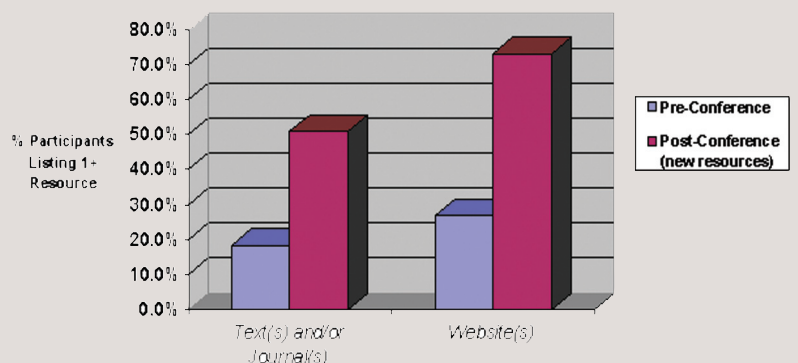
All of the results from the conference surveys support that the *Genetics For Your Practice II* conference was a successful educational event for Hawai'i health professionals. Thank you to all who attended the *Genetics For Your Practice II* conference. We will keep you posted through Gene News of future educational opportunities like these!

*A full summary of the Genetics For Your Practice II conference evaluation will be available at*  
**[www.hawaii-genetics.org](http://www.hawaii-genetics.org)**

**Figure 3: Obtaining Family History on Patients: Participants Reporting Obtaining Family History on Patients Prior to & Following the Conference**



**Figure 4: Genetics Resources: Participants Listing One or More Paper and/or Web Based Genetics Resource(s) Prior to & Following the Conference**



# *Welcome to the Teacher's Corner!*

## *Resource Kit Pilot*



The Genetics Program has been hard at work developing our "Teachers' Genetics Resource Kit" and it is almost ready! A summary of what is in the Resource Kit is to the right.

We are looking for high school teachers who are willing to pilot the resource kit with their classes. This would involve receiving a kit and using the lessons, activities, and resources in the kit. You would then provide us with an evaluation of the kit so that we can make any improvements before the mass distribution. If you are interested in piloting one of our resource kits, or have any ideas for the upcoming Teacher's Corner section of Gene News, please contact Kirsty McWalter at [kirsty@hawaiiigenetics.org](mailto:kirsty@hawaiiigenetics.org).

### **Overview of "Genetics Concept Areas"**

#### **Genetics Unit Plan**

#### **Genetics 101**

#### **Concept Areas** **(lesson plans included)**

Reproduction and Inheritance  
DNA  
Chromosomes  
Genes and Environment  
Proteins  
Cells  
Variation and Evolution  
Applications  
Ethics



#### **DVD's and CD's such as:**

"Clockwork Genes"  
"The Meaning of Sex and Gender"  
"Genetics Education program"  
"The Virtual Lab Series"  
"The Human Genome Project"  
"Basic Human Genetics"